

Back in the great days of the Indians, a maiden and her five brothers lived together. People in those times had to look for food, it was their

Depending on the individual storyteller, the Sioux legend of Stone Boy takes many different forms. The following version from the Cheyenne River Reservation was heard by Henry Crow Dog around 1910, when he was a child listening to the storytellers at the campfire.

[BRULE SIOUX]

STONE BOY

—Reported by Ella Clark in the 1950s.

never among the ancients; they were always animals, even as they are today. Besides the ancients, real people and real animals lived on the earth at that time. Old One made the people out of the last balls of mud he took from the earth. He rolled them over and over, shaped them like Indians, and blew on them to bring them alive. They were so ignorant that they were the most helpless of all the creatures Old One had made. Old One made people and animals into males and females so that they might breed and multiply. Thus all living things came from the earth. When we look around, we see part of our mother everywhere. The difficulty with the early world was that most of the ancients were selfish and some were monsters, and there was much trouble among them. They were also very stupid in some ways. Though they knew they had to hunt in order to live, they did not know which creatures were deer and which were people, and sometimes they ate people by mistake. At last Old One said, "There will soon be no people if I let things go on like this." So he sent Coyote to kill all the monsters and other evil beings among the ancients and teach the Indians how to do things. And Coyote began to travel on the earth, teaching the Indians, making life easier and better for them, and performing many wonderful deeds.

main occupation. So while the sister cooked and made clothes, the brothers spent their days hunting.

It happened once that this family moved their tipi to the bottom of a canyon. It was a strange, silent place, but there was water in a creek and the hunting was good. The canyon was cool in the summer and shielded from wind in the winter. Still, when the brothers went out hunting, the girl was always waiting for them. Waiting and listening, she heard noises. Often she thought they were footsteps, but when she looked outside, no one was there.

Then one evening, only four of the five brothers came back from hunting. They and the sister stayed awake all night, wondering what could have happened to the other. The next day when the men went hunting, only three returned. Again they and the sister stayed awake wondering. The next evening only two came home, and they and the girl were afraid.

In those early days the Indians had no sacred ceremonies or prayers to guide them, so it was hard for the maiden and her two brothers to watch through the night in that ghostly place. Again the brothers went out in the morning, and only a single one returned at night. Now the girl cried and begged him to stay home. But they had to eat, and so in the morning her last and youngest brother, whom she loved best of all, went out to hunt. Like the others, he did not come back. Now no one would bring the maiden food or water, or protect her.

Weeping, the girl left the canyon and climbed to the top of a hill. She wanted to die, but did not know how to. Then she saw a round pebble lying on the ground. Thinking that it would kill her, she picked it up and swallowed it.

With peace in her heart the maiden went back to the tipi. She drank some water and felt a stirring inside her, as if the rock were telling her not to worry. She was comforted, though she could not sleep for missing her brothers.

The next day she had nothing left to eat except some pemmican and berries. She meant to eat them and drink water from the creek, but she found she wasn't hungry. She felt as if she had been to a feast, and walked around singing to herself. The following day she was happy in a way she had never been before.

On the fourth day that the girl had been alone, she felt pain. "Now the end comes," she thought. "Now I die." She didn't mind, but instead of dying, she gave birth to a little boy.

"What will I do with this child?" she wondered. "How did it come? It must be that stone I swallowed."

The child was strong, with shining eyes. Though the girl felt weak

for a while, she had to keep going named him Iyan Hokshi, Ston clothes. Day after day he grew and with a more perfect body. The mother knew that her b was playing outside the tipi, he Looking at his flint arrowhead, it. "Maybe he knows that he thought. "He must have a rock The baby grew so fast that long, and as he matured his m him as she had lost her brothers ask why, he seemed to know. Very soon he was big enough his mother wept more than ever don't cry," he said. "You used to have five uncles. "But if you don't return," sh "I will come back," he told Stay in the tipi until I do."





for a while, she had to keep going to care for the new life, her son. She named him Iyan Hokshi, Stone Boy, and wrapped him in her brothers' clothes. Day after day he grew, ten times faster than ordinary infants, and with a more perfect body.

The mother knew that her baby had great powers. One day when he was playing outside the tipi, he made a bow and arrows, all on his own. Looking at his flint arrowhead, the mother wondered how he had done it. "Maybe he knows that he was a stone and I swallowed him," she thought. "He must have a rock nature."

The baby grew so fast that he was soon walking. His hair became long, and as he matured his mother became afraid that she would lose him as she had lost her brothers. She cried often, and though he did not ask why, he seemed to know.

Very soon he was big enough to go hunting, and when she saw this, his mother wept more than ever. Stone Boy came into the tipi. "Mother, don't cry," he said.

"You used to have five uncles," she said. "But they went out hunting. One after another, they did not come back." And she told him about his birth, how she had gone to the top of the hill and swallowed a stone, and how she had felt something moving inside her.

"I know," he said. "And I am going to look for your brothers, my uncles."

"But if you don't return," she sobbed, "what will I do?"

"I will come back," he told her. "I will come back with my uncles. Stay in the tipi until I do."

Henry Crow Dog is a full-blooded Sioux elder with a majestic face, craggy as the Black Hills themselves. He is the grandson of the famous Crow Dog, a chief, warrior, and leader of the Ghost Dancers. The first Crow Dog once voluntarily drove 150 miles to his own hanging for killing his rival, Chief Spotted Tail, only to be freed on orders of the Supreme Court, which ruled that federal law had no jurisdiction on an Indian reservation.

—Told by Henry Crow Dog, February 26, 1968, at Rosebud, South Dakota, and recorded by Richard Erdoes.

All this has been given to us so that we may live. We shall be a tribe." here for the first time: for purification, for life, for *wichosani*, for health. fire—these are sacred, these we will use from now on as we have done we will learn to worship. This little lodge, these rocks, the water, the Iyan, Tunka—rock—Tunka, Iyan. Tunkashila, the Grandfather Spirit, He also told them: "The rock saved me, and now it has saved you. This is what she wished for." Iyan Hokshi said, "This is what my mother—your sister—wanted. uncles." They smiled and laughed, happy to be alive again. looking young men sitting inside. He said, "*Hou, lekshi*, you must be my-shone into the little sweat lodge, and by their light he saw five good-rise into the sky as a feathery cloud. The bonfire and the moonlight both He opened the flap for the last time, watching the steam flow out and Boy, "Now I want to see my uncles." "I believe they have come to life," thought Iyan Hokshi, the Stone and talk. poured the fourth time, those dead, dried-up things also began to sing ring. When he poured the third time, he began to sing. And when he in the darkness. When he poured water a second time, he sensed a stir-lodge filled with steam so that he could see nothing but the white mist Always he spoke to the rocks and they to him. As he poured, the little times he poured the water; four times he opened the flap and closed it. over them, he thanked the rocks, saying, "You brought me here." Four robe, so that no air could escape or enter. Pouring water from the bag Iyan Hokshi closed the entrance of his little lodge with a flap of buffalo circle. picked up the old woman's water bag, a buffalo bladder decorated with quillwork, and filled it with water. He drew its rawhide tie tight and took it inside too. Then he placed the dried humans around him in a